

Amendments to the Specification

1. Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 17 and ending at page 8, line 4, as follows:

As is apparent from examination of Figs. 1-3, when the buffer tubes 3 are of the same outer diameter and each buffer tube 3 contacts adjacent tubes 3, an increase in the number of buffer tubes 3 determines an increase of the space bounded by the buffer tubes 3 and for the buffer tubes 3 to contact the strength member 4, the diameter of the strength member 4 must be increased also. Thus, the radius of the strength member 4 approximately doubles when the number of buffer tubes increases from four to five and approximately triples when the number of buffer tubes increases from four to six.

Correspondingly, the area occupied by the strength member increases by the square of the increase in radius ($\text{area}=\pi r^2$). Of course, a strength member 4 of circular cross-section does not fill all the space enclosed by the buffer ~~tubes 4~~ tubes 3, and therefore, the space bounded by the buffer ~~tubes 4~~ tubes 3 and not available for optical fibers in buffer ~~tubes 4~~ tubes 3, is even larger than the cross-section of the strength member 4.